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We REMEMBER when someone TERRORIZED Placentia's first AFRICAN AMERICAN family

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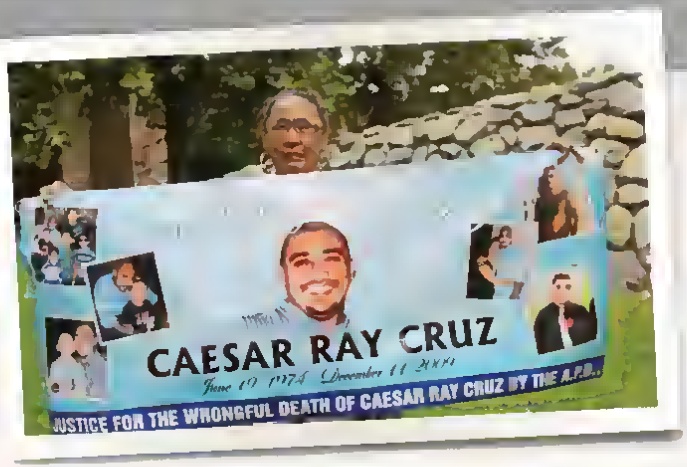

Dear Assemblymember Daly,

My son, Ceesar Cruz, was killed by Anaheim police when he was 35 years old He wes a loving fether of five boys He doted on them and was deeply involved in their lives, spending much of his free time volunteering at their football practice and games. Now, his five boys are fatherless – never to spend Father's Day, graduations, or Christmas with their father

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AB 392: The California Act to Save Lives is a common-sense update to the use-of-force standard in California that will prevent tragedies.

Please vote for AB 392 so other femilies don't have to endure the pein of losing e loved one to police violence

Sincerely,

Therese Smith

Assemblymember Daly:

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ROCK 'N' ROLL CAMP FOR GIRLS OC CLOSING PARTY

TESIA ZIGAROWSKI

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Original photo courtesy *Long Beach Independent* archives
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ORANGE FEATHERS »

FELIPE FLORES

OCWEEKLY

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EDITOR Matt Coker
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Patrice Manstees
SENIOR EDITOR, NEWS & INVESTIGATIONS R. Scott Moxley
STAFF WRITER Gabriel San Roman
MUSIC EDITOR Nate Jackson
FOOD EDITOR Cynthia Rebolledo
CALENDAR EDITOR Aimee Murillo
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT/ PROOFREADER Lisa Black
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS Dave Barton, Joel Beers, Lilledeshan Rose Josh Chesler, Heidi Darby-Stacy Davies, Charisma Dawn, Alex Distefano, Eric DeWitt, Jeanette Duran, Edwin Goei, Taylor Hamby, Candace Hansen, Daniel Kohn, Adam Levinus, Todd Mathews, Greg Nagel, Katrina Natress, Nick Nuk'em, Anne Maria Pamerigan, CJ Simonson, Andrew Tonkovich, Jefferson VanBilliard, Brittany Woolsey, Chris Ziegler
EDITORIAL INTERNS Steve Denofrio, Morgan Edwards, Lauren Galvan, Lila Shakti

EDITORIAL ART
CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS AlGas Leslie Agar, Reb Aul, Rob Dobi, Jeff Drew Scott Feinblatt, Felipe Flores, Bill Mayer, Luke McGarry
PHOTOGRAPHERS Wednesday Aja, Ed Carrasco, Brian Ersen, Scott Feinblatt, John Gilhooley Eric Haed, Nick Iversen, Allix Johnson, Matt Kollar, Isaac Larios Danny Liao, Fabian Ortiz, Josué Rivas, Eran Ryan, Matt Ulfelder, Miguel Vasconcellos Christopher Victoria, William Vo, Kevin Warn, Micah Wright

PRODUCTION
ART DIRECTOR Michael Ziobrowski
LAYOUT DESIGNER/PRODUCTION ARTIST Mercedes Del Real

SALES
PUBLISHER Cynthia Rebolledo
SALES DIRECTOR Kevin Davis
SR. SALES EXECUTIVE Jason Hamelberg
SALES EXECUTIVES Eric Bergstrom, Kathleen Ford, Daniel Voet, Jason Windar

MARKETING
SALES COORDINATOR Megan McElroy
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ADMINISTRATION
PRESIDENT & CEO Duncan McIntosh
VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER Jeff Fleming
AR COORDINATOR/HR MANAGER Herlinda Ortiz
ACCOUNTING MANAGER Alisha Miller

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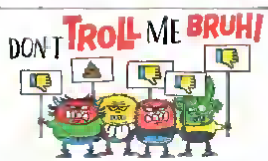

"ILLEGAL aliens have no rights. I don't get why this article is worried about ILLEGAL aliens being ousted."

—Bill, commenting on Sandra Da Anda of OC Immigrant Youth United's "License Plate Readers Coming to Downtown Fullerton Spark Immigrant Concerns" (May 7)

We respond: You make an excellent case for the government surveilling you, Bill

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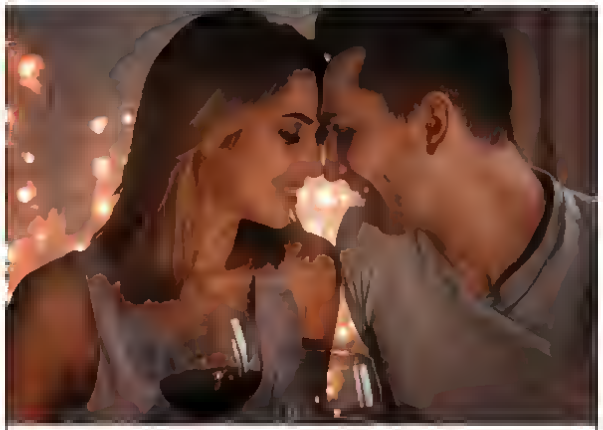

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The Hinky Defense

Can extreme public intoxication legally excuse murder?

Southern California federal judges recently studied a case involving an argument that broke out in a Santa Ana restaurant among two groups of alcohol-consuming diners who took opposing stances on a question. Is Sinaloa or Michoacan the superior state in Mexico?

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» R. SCOTT MOXLEY

Angry obscenities were hurled. Isais Mora and other members of his larger group, which supported the Michoacan side, eventually waited in the Mariscos la Ola parking lot for the pro-Sinaloa group, which included a stumbling Ivan Sanchez. When the two groups faced off, Mora punched Sanchez in the face before his allies joined in the beating.

Sanchez and his group managed to flee in a Ford Explorer, retrieve a gun and return to the parking lot about 15 minutes later to seek revenge for being insulted. When they arrived, they saw Esteban Navarrete near his vehicle with his wife, his niece and his niece's boyfriend, all of whom had been inside the restaurant to witness the argument while having nothing to do with it.

But 21-year-old Sanchez pointed a gun at Navarrete, who pleaded, "It's not us!" according to police reports. Without saying a word, Sanchez fired the weapon, striking the 35-year-old in the head and killing him.

When Santa Ana Police Department Officer Jim Garcia interviewed Sanchez after his attempted flight to Mexico, the suspect explained he'd "felt disrespected because I was with a girl" and he "wanted to get them back because what they done [sic] to us." Informed Navarrete wasn't Mora, Sanchez said the victim's shirt reminded him of Mora's.

An Orange County jury in September 2012 convicted Sanchez of first-degree murder after a two-day trial, and a judge later sentenced him to a prison term of 50 years to life. But the inmate has been working from prison to overturn his conviction by claiming he did not commit a premeditated murder because he'd acted in "an unplanned assault spurred by drunken anger."

He added that he'd been "extremely intoxicated."

In February, U.S. Magistrate Judge Sheri Pym noted, "Evidence of voluntary intoxication is not a defense to first-degree murder," as well as that "contrary to the petitioner's contention, a rational trier of fact can interpret the evidence as establishing his actions were willful, deliberate and premeditated." Pym issued a recommendation to reject the appeal, as the California Court of Appeal had previously done.

U.S. District Court Judge Ronald S.W. Lew adopted that stance and closed the case in recent days.

Sanchez, now 30, will continue to serve his punishment inside Ironwood State Prison in Blythe.

Two others—Maria Isabel Rocha and her brother Ricardo Guerra Rocha—were also sentenced to prison for their roles in the murder case.

SANCHEZ, SOBER

COURTESY ORANGE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

IS IT ALWAYS SAFE TO CALL IRVINE POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR HELP?

A Southern California man is suing the city of Irvine and its police department in the wake of a bizarre July 26, 2018, incident worthy of a *Twilight Zone* episode.

Earlier that day, Labarian Willis had obtained a court-issued protective order requiring Aryanna Ferris to stay at least 100 yards away from him. Ferris nonetheless showed up and "began acting hysterical and violent," according to the lawsuit filed this month inside the Ronald Reagan Federal Courthouse in Santa Ana.

Willis called the Irvine Police Department, informed dispatch of the situation and waited for assistance.

Officer Krista Valentine arrived and "immediately began treating Willis as if he was the suspect," according to Gregory Peacock, a Newport Beach-based plaintiff's attorney. "Willis explained to Valentine and [other officers] that he is the one who called the police, he is the one who is the protected party in the court order, and that Ferris was in violation of the order."

Peacock also noted that Ferris didn't accuse his client of committing any crime.

However, the officer said it "was the Irvine Police Department practice to arrest one of the parties when they respond to a call for service involving domestic violence," the lawsuit asserts.

Valentine decided the best person to arrest was Willis, whom she had frustrated. She threw him in jail, where he stayed for 24 hours. He won his release only after paying $200,000 in bail.

The Orange County district attorney's office (OCDA) didn't contribute to the mess, as prosecutors refused to file charges.

Peacock's 17-page lawsuit alleges that Willis' constitutional rights were violated, including unlawful seizure, negligence and false imprisonment.

The attorney advised U.S. District Court Judge David O. Carter that "None of the defendants to this action had a warrant for Willis' arrest, nor probable cause to believe that he had committed a crime, nor reasonable suspicion that he was a danger to anyone or anything, nor even a reasonable suspicion of crime afoot by him."

Lawyers for the city have not yet filed a formal response in court.

SADISTIC CHILD PORN TRIPS U.S. MARINE

Federal prosecutors in Orange County believed Jose Lanzaorellana deserved to spend 78 months in prison after being caught in 2015 possessing more than 600 images of "sadistic or masochistic conduct" involving prepubescent children.

In January, Lanzaorellana—an Irvine resident who served in the U.S. Marines—pleaded guilty in hopes of winning a term of 18 months of incarceration, he's "given up pornography altogether," he says, and is now properly raising his stable children.

Lanzaorellana's defense lawyer told Carter—himself a U.S. Marine combat veteran during the worst Vietnam War battle, Khe Sanh, in 1968—that his client collected the porn because of depression and that it helped him fall asleep at night.

Carter decided the appropriate punishment is 51 months in federal prison, plus supervised probation for 10 years upon release.

Lanzaorellana, 45, has until noon on July 22 to self-surrender to the U.S. Bureau of Prisons.

RSCOTTMOXLEY@OCWEEKLY.COM

a clockwork orange»

» MATT COKER

COURTESY OC COASTKEEPER

Youth Hostile

For the 2020 presidential election a wave of young adults will enter voting booths for the first time, and they are fired up about climate change. Among them will be Arjun Marwaha, a 17-year-old Anaheim resident and climate-change activist who just released his first book, *Our Changing Earth: Why Climate Change Matters to Young People*.

The 11th grader at Fairmont Preparatory Academy argues that debating the issue is important because it stimulates awareness and discussions about climate-change solutions. "If we get lost in the politics, we lose the essence of the movement, and we lose our future along with it," Marwaha recently told *Education Week*. "We're the ones inheriting the Earth. ... We will be seeing the consequences."

Climate change also resonates with those who will be too young to vote in the next presidential election. Students at Columbus Tustin Middle School held their second-annual Climate Solutions Summit on May 14, culminating a school year's worth of research aimed at finding ways on campus to compost, conserve water and eliminate—or at least reduce—the use of cardboard and plastic lunch utensils.

The relationship between climate change and beach erosion will be among the topics discussed with 1,350 inland students coming to Kids Ocean Day in Huntington Beach on Tuesday. Besides learning about the environment, the students will participate in a beach cleanup and group photograph. Taken from hundreds of feet above, the image will show the youths gathered to form a whale shape filled with the event's slogan, "Protect What You Love."

"This is our biggest Kids Ocean Day yet," promises Dyana Peña, Coastkeeper's educational director. "This year's message of 'Protect What You Love' truly speaks to what this event is about. These kids rarely get the chance to interact with these natural spaces, and once they do, they understand why we need to protect them and that they have the power to do so."

Local (and national) politicians should take note because these kids will one day realize the power they also have in the voting booth.

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Power of Pie

You are the pizzeria my family and I ordered food from the evening after my father-in-law's funeral. We chose your place because it was his favorite restaurant, and he had done freelance office work there for years. Several staff members came by to express their condolences as we waited for the sustenance that would be taken to family and friends at the post-funeral reception. As bags and bags were set on the counter next to the register, I was informed to put my wallet away. "It's on us," I was told, "and if you need anything else, let us know." You are my family's favorite restaurant, too.

RDEAUL

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

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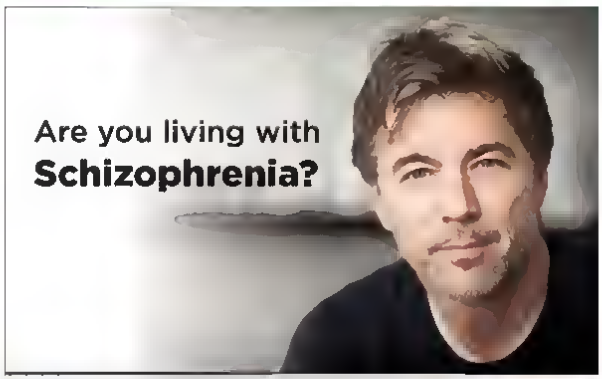

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THE FIREBOMBING TIME FORGOT

We REMEMBER when someone TERRORIZED Placentia's first AFRICAN AMERICAN family

BY ANTHONY PIGNATARO

It was near midnight when someone crept around the back of the house at 433 Missouri Ave., Placentia. In their hands were homemade Molotov cocktails—likely wine bottles filled with gasoline. They lit the first bomb but threw it too high; it sailed over the house and blew apart on the front lawn. But a second device was thrown at a much shallower angle, allowing it to burst through a window and explode near a bed. Flaming gasoline struck the bed linens and drapes. Two young girls had been sleeping there. Fifteen-year-old Jean Ann woke up first and cried out, then raced to her parents while her sister Pamela, 10, lay terrified beneath the bed sheets.

This was the welcoming Gerald Harris and his family, the first African Americans to live in Placentia, received when they moved into their new home. It was August 1956. Dwight Eisenhower was cruising to an easy presidential re-election, Boston Red Sox legend Ted Williams spat on a spectator mocking him at Fenway Park; and buying a house was a difficult, often dangerous thing to do for African Americans throughout the nation.

Though it wasn't called it at the time, the firebombing of the Harris household was what Cal State Fullerton history professor Tyler Parry deems a "legitimate act of domestic terrorism." Not one of Placentia's 3,000 residents in July 1956 had been African American, and someone wanted it to stay that way.

Terrorism directed toward black people throughout the United States was frighteningly common during our nation's history, especially in the first half of the 20th century. Lynchings, race riots and bombings were all too common, especially as the federal government began to enact civil-rights legislation that dismantled the old Jim Crow barriers to voting, working and home ownership.

Though newspapers around the state reported on the bombing, it didn't take long for the story to run its course. The *Los Angeles Times* reported the day after the incident that Placentia Police Chief Albert Simmen "vowed to work 24 hours a day until he arrests those responsible," but there were no arrests, indictments, trials or convictions. Indeed, whoever threw the bombs apparently vanished into the night. Today, the bombing is largely forgotten, rarely mentioned outside local history books that focus on the experiences of African Americans, and even then, it's only in passing.

But missing from even these discussions of the bombing is any mention of what became of the Harris family. Though Gerald, 35 at the time and the father of seven children, including the two girls who were nearly killed in the attack, said in the *Register* two days after the bombing, "I'll never leave in a million years," he and his family did depart the city. In fact, voter-registration records indicate they were out by 1960.

Records of the family's movements after 1956 are fragmented, and I could locate no living member of the household who experienced the firebombing. Those records that do exist paint a complicated image of a family that still had further hardships to come. But what African American family has ever had an easy life?

Gerald Harris was born on July 15, 1921, in the tiny town of Jacksonville, Texas. Located in Cherokee County in East Texas, Jacksonville at that time considered itself the "tomato capital of the world." The eldest of six children, Harris stayed in Texas for the first two decades of his life.

In the summer of 1939, Harris apparently received a two-year prison sentence for burglary, according to Texas criminal-justice records. It's unclear exactly how much of this sentence he served (the 1940 census lists Harris as living at home and working as a cook), and the details of how and why this happened are lost to history. But it's also important to remember he was both poor and living in a rural East Texas town that, because of Jim Crow, had robbed him of his humanity before he took his first breath. During Harris' early life, the state government passed laws segregating public schools, libraries and transportation, as well as outlawing interracial marriage.

In any case, Harris married Catherine Grimes in Pima, Arizona, on Sept. 5, 1942. His draft-registration card, filled out seven months prior, listed him as 6 feet tall and 178 pounds. It's unclear whether Harris (or his father, who was just 17 years older than him and also registered for the draft in 1942) served in World War II, but by 1946, Gerald and Catherine had continued moving west. Pamela was born in Los Angeles.

Little is known as to why Harris and his family chose to move to Placentia in 1956. It couldn't have been an easy decision. In 1950, just 889 of the more than 216,000 people living in all of Orange County were African American. And as far as Placentia was concerned, zero African Americans were living there.

Though not really considered an official "sundown town"—a place where African Americans were told, either through signs or word of mouth, to leave once night fell or face potential violent retribution—historian and author James Loewen considered any town with few or no African American residents to be a sundown town. By that definition, Placentia was definitely such a place in early 1956. At that time, the quiet residential and agricultural community's entire police department employed, at most, eight officers.

In August 1956, the Harrises signed papers to buy a home on Missouri Avenue, near Orangethorpe. The selling price, according to historian Robert Johnson, was $13,000. At the time, Gerald worked as a mechanic at the Craig Shipbuilding Co. in Long Beach. He told reporters that he and his wife used their life's savings for the down payment and had signed first and second mortgages.

Donald Joseph and his family, who were also African American, moved into the same neighborhood, though on nearby Kansas Avenue. Word got out fast. In fact, the *Register* reported on Aug. 3, 1956, that residents were already asking Simmen to stop them.

"Several people came in and complained to me about the fact that negroes were going to move into the tract and asked what they could do about it and if I could do anything about it," Simmen told the *Register*. "I told them there was nothing in the law to prevent anyone from buying a home in the area, and it was my duty to uphold the law and protect the life and property of everyone regardless of race, creed or color."

Simmen, who previously served as police chief of Elsinore (now Lake Elsinore), had taken over the Placentia job in late 1953. He seemed to know that violence was in the air because in that same *Register* article, he warned anyone trying anything that "you'll see me."

The warning didn't work. According to Johnson, on Aug. 14, 1956, the Harris and Joseph families told police that someone had broken into their new homes and poured concrete down all the drains. The intruders had also poured motor oil on their kitchen floors, busted windows, sliced up the carpeting and burned crosses on both families' front lawns. (Much of the information on the events leading up to the firebombing comes from a new book Johnson's working on, he graciously agreed to provide me with a copy of the chapter dealing with the Placentia bombing.)

As Johnson notes in his unpublished book, all of that vandalism would be considered a "hate crime" today, though no one used that term back then. And none of it dissuaded either family from moving in.

"The police chief stated that he would be questioning three women in regard to alleged bombing threats and secret meetings somewhere in the tract," Johnson wrote. "He also stated that the families would be given every protection available." Then, on Aug. 16, 1956, the *Register* reported that Simmen had interviewed an astonishing "50 to 60" people who had made some sort of threat against the two families, but the police chief also believed that "the issue has already reached a peak and the people have the bitterness out of their system."

He couldn't have been more wrong.

FEATURES INDEX

Ina

Where Bomb Entered Home

COURTESY LONG BEACH INDEPENDENT ARCHIVES

The firebombing took place at midnight on Aug. 20, 1956—just a couple of days after the Harris family had moved in. Johnson, in his unpublished manuscript, vividly described the chaos and terror that shook the household immediately after the bomb detonated in Pamela and Jean Ann's bedroom.

"While Mrs. Harris was carrying Pam out of the room, Mr. Harris went to the kitchen, filled a pan and a bucket with water, raced to the children's bedroom, and threw water on the burning drapes," Johnson wrote. "Using the pan and bucket, the Harrises finally extinguished the fire. Pam, who was badly frightened, refused to go back into her bedroom. Mrs. Harris spent the remainder of the night reading her Bible. She left the Bible open to a verse, 'David trusteth in the Lord.'"

It's remarkable that no one was injured. Outside, neighbors gathered around the house. Many offered assistance; a few even offered Harris weapons.

"[The neighbors] have been wonderful to us," Harris later told a reporter for the *Long Beach Independent*. "Some of them offered us shelter after that bombing. Some even offered us guns to protect our children. But we don't need guns." A photo accompanying the *Independent*'s Aug. 22,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

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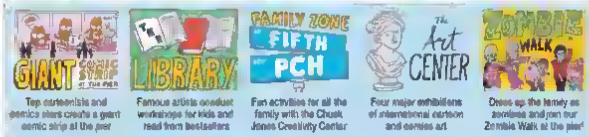
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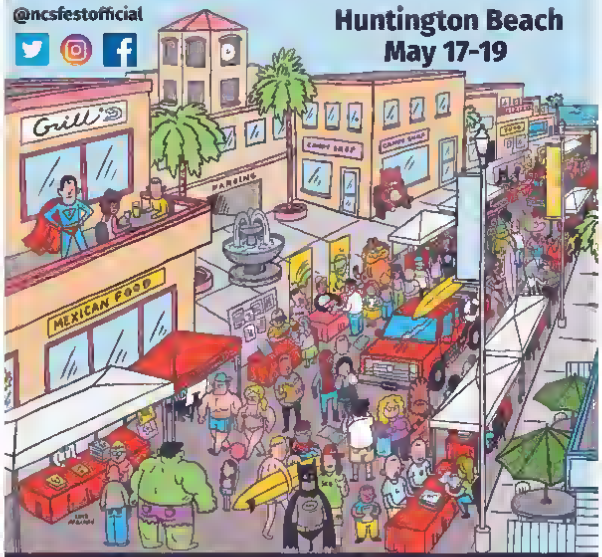

Full details at ncsfest.com

THE FIREBOMBING TIME FORGOT

» FROM PAGE 9

1956, story showed Gerald and Pamela sitting in the burned bedroom, while Jean Ann stood outside, peering through the hole in the window made by the firebomb.

Immediately after the terrorist attack, Simmen told a United Press reporter that his department would look around the clock until they arrested those responsible. He also placed a 24-hour guard on the Harris house; it was apparently still in place weeks later, when Simmen attended a Placentia City Council meeting and told Thomas Neuson of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) that it wasn't necessary for the NAACP to provide extra security for Harris (who received a standing ovation at the meeting). But not everyone present had the best interests of the Harris family—and African Americans in general—at heart.

"One city official commented that one of the mistakes made in the past was that they had 'generally gone too fast,'" Johnson wrote in his unpublished manuscript. "We can assume that the official meant that the integration process should be slowed down."

Despite all the people the Placentia PD interviewed who had allegedly threatened the Harris family before the firebombing, I could find no evidence that Simmen or his department ever arrested anyone for the attack. Two years later, the Placentia City Council gave Simmen a choice: resign or get fired. Simmen refused to step down, and the council sacked him on the last day of 1958. "Mayor [Ray] Pound said poor morale in the department and lack of leadership of the seven-man police force was the basis for Simmen's removal," the *Los Angeles Times* reported on Jan. 1, 1959. The chief's supporters, including his wife, immediately called for a recall of the entire City Council, but that didn't happen, either.

Very little is known about what became of the Harris family after the bombing. They stayed on Missouri Avenue for a few years, but Gerald's 1960 voter registration lists a Santa Ana address. Records indicate that he died just two years later at the age of 41. I could not locate a cause. He's buried in Jacksonville City Cemetery, in the Texas town of his birth. Catherine remarried, she died in 2004.

I could find no record of what became of Jean Ann. As for Pamela, who was just 10 at the time of the bombing, she died in Los Angeles in 2002 at the age of 56. The coroner classified her death as an accident, the official report on her death listed "upper gastrointestinal hemorrhage" as the primary cause, followed by "esophageal varices," "hepatic cirrhosis" and "chronic alcoholism."

The house at 433 Missouri Ave. is long gone. The Placentia City Council condemned it in 1965, along with 32 other homes in the neighborhood. "This was to make way for the construction of a proposed 57 freeway and to rid this city of what Mayor Victor Michel described as an 'attractive nuisance,'" Johnson wrote in his unpublished manuscript. "The mayor was referring to the 'condemned substandard and hazardous' vacant homes in the path of the freeway."

So why is so little known about the bombing today? There are a few reasons. Because of segregated and racist housing laws, African Americans have never been a large group collectively in California. As a result, black people largely live in isolated enclaves, and their narratives and stories about what their lives are like are often ignored. Besides, the official story of California is one of racial harmony.

"The common narrative we're told is that when you cross the border into California, racism disappears," says Parry. "But Jim Crow did exist here, and segregation was very real. California was very much a part of what was happening anywhere else."

Before Parry moved to California, he did graduate work in South Carolina. There, he found that many cities had begun placing markers at spots where acts of racist violence had occurred. "I found it interesting that there's at least a recognition that something terrible happened there," he says. But here, though acts like the Placentia bombing did take place, not only is there no marker on the spot, but much of the neighborhood where it happened has literally been paved over, as well.

Today, the Southern Poverty Law Center says the number of active hate groups in

the U.S. is at a 20-year high, with 1,020 of them spread across the country. The number of groups rose 7 percent between 2017 and 2018. Of these groups, 148 are considered white-supremacist hate groups—up from 100 just a year before.

In a November 2018 report, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) found that the number of terror attacks from extremist right-wing groups quadrupled from 2016 to 2017. During the same time, they also rose 43 percent in Europe. Between 2007 and 2011, there were five or fewer such attacks in the U.S. each year. In 2017, according to CSIS, there were 31.

Despite what at least one member of the Placentia City Council wished, the integration of the town did not slow down after the 1956 firebombing. If anything, it accelerated. By 1960, there were 176 African Americans living there (out of a total population of 6,780). The Harris family didn't stay in the neighborhood as long as they initially told reporters, but they did stay long enough to make clear they wouldn't flee from terroristic violence.

Those who did choose to follow the Harris family did not have it easy.

In 1957, the physician and Olympic diving champion Dr. Sammy Lee made preparations to move to Santa Ana. As he was doing so, he received an anonymous phone call. "You know what happened in Placentia," the caller said, according to historian Scott Kurashige's 2008 book *The Shifting Grounds of Race*. "The same can happen to you."

Lee moved anyway, but many whites were moving now, too. In fact, as Johnson pointed out, both in his unpublished book and in *A Different Shade of Orange*, which he co-wrote with Charlene Riggins in 2009, white people left Placentia's Kansas-Missouri neighborhood as fast as black families moved in. By 1960, when Marine Corps Sergeant John Frank Smith bought a house on Kansas Avenue, all the white residents were gone.

"[It was] 100 percent black," Smith said in an oral history Johnson recorded of him that he later included in *A Different Shade of Orange*. "There were no white people living there. That's the only place that had black people living here in Placentia."

Smith was a veteran of World War II, Korea and Vietnam, and he later became a Placentia police officer and eventually an Orange County Superior Court clerk. He and his family lived on Kansas Avenue for a few years, and then in 1968 bought a new house in northern Placentia. Like the Harris family a decade earlier, Smith encountered trouble from his white neighbors the instant he arrived.

At first, it was just people staring at him while he unloaded furniture from a moving van. Later, they started throwing rocks at his house, shattering his windows. Smith's wife asked if they should move. "No," Smith told her, according to his oral history. "We've got to have some place to live, and we're going to live here, regardless."

Not long after, while Smith was seeding his lawn, eight men walked up to him. "We don't want no [plural n-word] living here," one of the men told Smith. "When [plural n-word] and colored people move into a white neighborhood, they make our property value go down. You got two weeks to get out of here."

Smith said he told the men that his family had to live somewhere. Then another man started poking Smith, repeating the threat that his family had two weeks to leave. After Smith told the man to keep his hands to himself, the man slapped Smith, which prompted him to draw his service revolver, which he'd started keeping in his back pocket for just such an occasion.

By then, there were new institutions forming to help minorities who wanted to move into previously all-white neighborhoods. The Orange County Council for Equal Opportunity had formed in June 1956, just a couple of months prior to the Placentia bombing. Its mission was to "discuss and act constructively upon problems of discrimination and prejudice against negroes, Mexican Americans, Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans and other minority people of Orange County in the spirit of goodwill and fair play," according to a June 14, 1956, *Tustin News* article. Another was the Orange County Human Relations Commission, which formed in 1971 to "build mutual understanding among residents and to eliminate prejudice, intolerance and discrimination."

While helpful, these organizations continue to struggle against racist forces. Most county residents may have forgotten (or, more likely, never even learned about) the 1956 Placentia bombing, but the white supremacy that fueled it lives on—in Orange County and around the nation, through cops shooting unarmed black people, racial profiling, and a huge gap in home ownership between white and black families that persists to this day.

The question isn't if what happened in Placentia 63 years ago could happen again. It's when.

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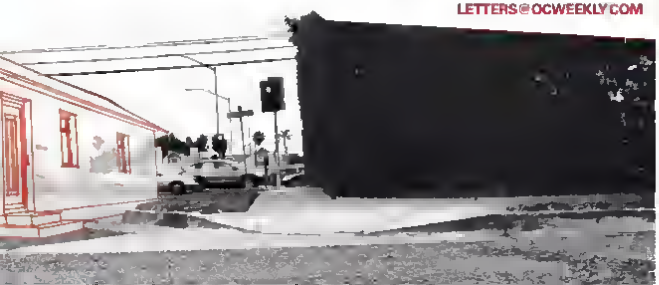

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fri/05/17

[FOOD & DRINK]

Hope You're Hungry
OC Night Market

If you can even get into the fairgrounds parking lot on the evening of the OC Night Market, consider that a mini triumph. This, the first Night Market of the warm-weather season, is so dang popular that the massive lot can barely contain the throngs of people flocking to consume numerous street-food and drink novelties. Yes, there's live music and shopping and art, but the *real* draw of the OC Night Market is the sheer quantity of snacks and treats ranging from old-school traditional to straight-up bizarre. Rainbow elote and croissant-concha hybrids? Cup O' Noodles ramen piled high with gourmet add-ins? Yes, please. Drinks served in giant light-bulbs or gallon-sized baby bottles? Just take our money already.

OC Night Market at OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500, www.ocnightmarket.com. 4 p.m., also Sat.-Sun. $5, weekend pass, $12. —ERIN DEWITT

[ART]

Drawing You In
NCSFest

Somebody pinch us, please, because this weekend Orange County will be blessed with the presence of an epic lineup of cartoonists and comic artists that you'd expect to see at Comic-Con for three times the ticket price. Modeled after European festivals that overtake entire towns, this massive comic love-in will take place throughout the downtown Huntington Beach area and will include such big-name talents as Jaime and Gilbert Hernandez, Daniel Clowes, Cathy Guisewite, Ed Brubaker, Gemma Correll, Lalo Alcaraz, Sergio Arragones, and Penelope Gazin, all of whom will be participating in signing events at the pier. Panels, drawing battles, art exhibits, artist alleys, concerts and even a giant comic unfolding on the pier are among the many events that round out this amazing fest.

NCSFest on Main Street, between Fifth and Olive, Huntington Beach, ncsfest.com. 10 a.m., also Sat.-Sun. Free admission, ticketed events, $10-$50. —AIMEE MURILLO

sat/05/18

[RECREATION]

TOO CUTE!
Goat Yoga

The usual sounds of deep breathing and exhales you'd expect to hear at your normal yoga session will be joined by a symphony of "awww!" and "how cute!" at today's Goat Yoga class. Such events are sweeping the nation these days, and we all know it's not necessarily to align your chakras—but you will reach a certain level of nirvana playing and laughing with these adorably precocious creatures. Spectra Yoga and the Fountain Valley Cloverdales 4-H club aim to not only decrease participants' stress, but also lighten up the usual yoga class. Frozen-fruit bars, goat-milk products and T-shirts will be for sale, plus there will be optional photo and play sessions with the goats. Don't forget to bring your own yoga mat, towel and water.

GoatYoga at Centennial Farm at OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500, spectrayoga.com/events. 9:30 a.m. $45. —AIMEE MURILLO

[CONCERT]

Inglorious Rockers
Los Mysteriosos and the Cineramas

Dick Dale may be gone, but the spirit of his music lives on—especially for *Pulp Fiction* fans. Tonight, lovers of Quentin Tarantino's film soundtracks can catch a live performance of several tracks, including Dale's arrangement of "Misirlou," by the 10-piece outfit the Cineramas, who'll perform while dressed as characters from the director's oeuvre. But that's just the opener, following them are Mexican *rockeros* Los Mysteriosos, who'll bring their own surf-laden tracks. Although this free show begins at 10 p.m., we recommend you get to the Boathouse early to get a good seat and indulge in some fine dining!

Los Mysteriosos and the Cineramas at Boathouse Collective, 1640 Pomona Ave., Costa Mesa, (949) 646-3176, boathousecollective.com. 10 p.m. Free. —SCOTT EEINBLATT

sun/05/19

[CONCERT]

The Messenger

An Evening With Johnny Marr

Unlike his notoriously surly and temperamental former band mate, Johnny Marr has been a reliable, if not warm, source of music and interviews in recent years. Following the breakup of the Smiths, the iconic British band's former guitarist has carved out a nice solo career that includes his participation with Modest Mouse. Though he doesn't have the flair and knack for headlines that Morrissey does, Marr continues to release solid music, the latest being *Call the Comet*.

An Evening With Johnny Marr at the House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Ste. 337, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim. 7:30 p.m. $35 —WYOMING REYNOLDS

[LGBT EVENTS]

Shaping History

Long Beach Pride

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the monumental Stonewall riots of 1969, this year's Long Beach Pride looks to be significantly more epic than ever. The two-day event officially starts Saturday with a full day of musical entertainment that includes Big Freedia and Ada Vox, fun zones for creative playtime, a community vendor fair, and many programs. But today's big draw is the Pride parade, during which LGBT+ members of the community and allies can march together in solidarity in a judgement-free zone. Don't miss the Block Party, which includes drag queens, artists and others speaking on the impact and legacy of the Stonewall riots.

Long Beach Pride at Marina Green Park, 450 E. Shoreline Dr., Long Beach, (562) 987-9191, longbeachpride.com. $20; VIP, $125. —AIMEE MURILLO

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mon/05/20

[FILM]

RIP, Agnès

Cleo From 5 to 7

Director Agnes Varda's existential, real-time film follows Cleo, a spoiled pop singer and hypochondriac, as she wanders through Paris between the hours of 5 and 7 p.m. while worried that she may have cancer—yet more concerned about how it might disfigure her than kill her. Varda's masterpiece was hailed as a dazzling example of the French New Wave in 1962 and a powerful commentary on the subject of female identity that critic Molly Haskell writes shows how that identity "is a function of how women see and are seen by the world."

Cleo From 5 to 7 at the Frida Cinema, 305 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 285-9422, www.thefridacinema.org. 2, 4, 6 & 8 p.m., also Tues. $7-$10. —SR DAVIES

tue/05/21

[THEATER]

Spy Vs. Fly

M. Butterfly

David Henry Hwang's celebrated 1988 tour de force, *M. Butterfly*, closes South Coast Repertory's season—and what a closer. Considering the play's once-surprising key plot element, especially post-*Hedwig*, and today's nearly universal (except in Trumpland) embrace of, even advocacy for, LGBTQ rights, the company bravely stages a revised version of the story about pretending, betrayal and willful self-delusion. While most audiences know how the love affair between a Chinese opera diva (and Communist spy) and a French diplomat ends, its lesson about fantasy and power is still new.

M. Butterfly at South Coast Repertory, 650 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-5555, www.scr.org. 7:30 p.m. Through June 8. $63-$69 —ANDREW TONKOVICH

wed/05/22

[ART]

Go West

'The Art of Hernando Villa'

In collaboration with Musco Center for the Arts' Heartbeat of Mexico Festival, Hilbert Museum hosts a pop-up exhibition of five works by early-20th-century painter Hernando Villa. Born in 1881, Villa witnessed the transitional changes of the Southern California and Baja regions through various socio-economic booms. Having studied as a painter with Louise Garden MacLeod, Villa developed a niche with his Old West landscapes and images of California missions, many of which landed him commercial work in magazines, commissions for murals and a post as artist for the Santa Fe Railroad, where he worked for more than 40 years. This exhibit, although small, showcases his talents, as well as the visuals of a bygone era.

"The Art of Hernando Villa" at Hilbert Museum, 167 Atchison St., Orange, (714) 516-5880; hilbertmuseum.com. 11 a.m. Through May 26. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO

GRAEME J. RATY/SHUTTERSTOCK

[CONCERT]

LOVE LIKE BLOOD

Killing Joke

English rock band Killing Joke have a legacy of doom and gloom that has influenced other hard-rock, post-punk, Goth and metal bands since their inception in 1985—a time when the music scene was heavily taken over either by stylish synthesizers or hair-metal giants. Killing Joke's sound has survived a lengthy history of drama, lineup changes and even commercial shifts, but the band's passions for reinvention and multiple styles of music have allowed them to reach a wider audience. In celebration of their 40th anniversary, the group are commemorating their history with limited-edition box sets and a LaughAtYour Peril tour, which stops at Santa Ana's Yost Theater tonight.

Killing Joke at the Yost Theater, 307 N Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, (714) 942-6060; theyosttheater.com. 8 p.m. $35-$65. —AIMEE MURILLO

thu/05/23

PERISCOPE FILMS

[FILM]

THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE

Bellingcat: Truth in a Post-Truth World

Everything you've ever wanted to know about the secretive, citizen investigative-journalist collective Bellingcat and its work is told through this gripping documentary, screening at the Orange County Museum of Art tonight as part of its ongoing Cinema Orange collaboration with the Newport Beach Film Festival. Bellingcat has explored some of the most mysterious cases to have shaken the public, as well as scrutinized questionable reports from world governments. Director Hans Pool selectively looks at some of the group's highest-profile case studies in recent years, as well as the passion for truth that drives this team of super-sleuths.

Bellingcat: Truth in a Post-Truth World at the Orange County Museum of Art, 1661 W. Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 780-2130; www.ocmaexpand.org. 7 p.m. Free; RSVP recommended. —AIMEE MURILLO

[COMEDY]

Laugh, Clown, Laugh

Puddles Pity Party

We've seen a lot of unconventional comedy acts pass through the Coach House over the years (John Waters' Christmas comedy tour comes to mind), but Puddles Pity Party takes the cake (or rather the pie, and in the face). Puddles has garnered millions of YouTube views for his sad singing style, in which he reinterprets classic rock songs in a heartfelt, weepy manner, but he offsets the tears with humorous asides at various intervals. The veritable viral sensation headlines the hill, with cult comedy figure Neil Hamburger supporting. The comic creation of Gregg Turkington, Hamburger's greasy combover-wearing, neurotic weirdo will hawk absurd jokes—and loogies—for your enjoyment. This may be the strangest comedic pairing ever.

Puddles Pity Party, with Neil Hamburger, Sean Wheeler and the Reluctant Messengers, at the Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930, thecoachhouse.com. 8 p.m. $35. —AIMEE MURILLO

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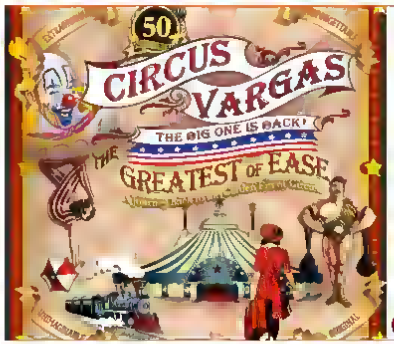

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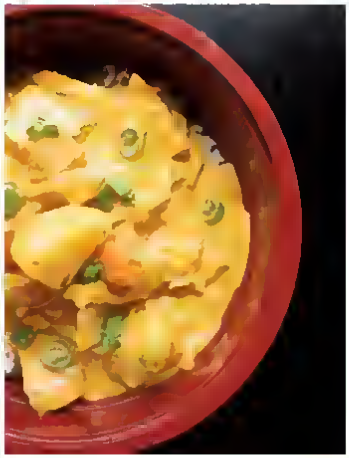


WASH IT DOWN WITH THAI TEA

PHOTOS BY CHRISTINE CHEUNG

Poultry Proliferation

The Chicken Rice in Santa Ana specializes in Hainan chicken rice

BY EDWIN GOEI

The best meal I had in Singapore was a dish called Hainan chicken rice. And as with all great food found in Singapore, I had it inside an unbearably hot-and-humid hawker center from a stand that made nothing but its chosen specialty.

One of the men who worked there took a plastic bowl to scoop up rice from a repurposed 10-gallon cooler and plopped it onto a waiting plate while his co-worker got to work on the chicken. I couldn't see him chopping, but I heard the *thunk-thunk-thunk* of his Chinese cleaver from where I was standing.

The small plate of Hainan chicken rice assembled for me was glorious. The rice was scrumptious, inexplicably warm despite where it was stored, as well as rich. As the late Anthony Bourdain said when he visited, the rice was worthy of a meal on its own. And the chicken, which is served cold, was moist, juicy, with its skin jellied—the best and most unadulterated piece of fowl I've ever had. This was the pinnacle of poultry purity.

Even though I was dripping sweat from every pore as I ate it, I still daydream about that meal. There's no other dish on Earth that utilizes poultry the way it does. The chicken is at the center of everything. And since there are so few ingredients, technique counts for a lot. It takes years to know precisely how long to poach the bird, then when to plunge it into an ice bath that preserves the texture of the collagen underneath the skin.

The poaching liquid becomes the soup that's served on the side. Meanwhile, the raw rice grains are fried with schmaltz, garlic and ginger before they're boiled with more chicken broth. What results is a mound of slightly sticky rice so luminous and umami-packed it's as integral to the dish as the chicken itself.

As hummus is to the Middle East, Hainan chicken rice has gone beyond its place of origin in China and proliferated to every corner of Southeast Asia.

A Thai family owns the new restaurant in Santa Ana called the Chicken Rice. The menu has four Thai curries and tom yum, but there's no mistaking this shop as anything other than a Hainan chicken rice specialist—currently the only one of its kind in Orange County.

As at that Singaporean hawker stand, whole chickens hung on hooks. On closer inspection, I realized the hanging birds were decorative and made of plastic. But when I ordered the signature dish, I heard the familiar, reassuring *thunk-thunk-thunk* of the cleaver.

What was served brought me back to that steamy plate. The rice is perfect. Perfumed with ginger and as shiny as polished ivory, it was flavored so deeply with chicken it could be eaten plain.

The poached chicken it flanked was stripped off the bone and tasted, like, well, chicken. Though not as life changing as the one I ate in Singapore, I didn't expect it to be. Still, I'd argue it's one of the best Hainan chickens in Southern California. It's certainly the most authentic in OC, unlike Capital Noodle Bar, the Chicken Rice has the balls to serve the bird as it's intended to be served—with the skin fully intact and as dark meat pieces.

The restaurant did, however, hedge its bets by also offering a fried version, with the chicken cocooned in golden-brown batter that replaces the jellied texture of the boiled skin with a noisy crunch. Both versions of the bird get even better when doused with the three sauces supplied, including a sweet-sticky soy sauce and a sweet-and-spicy chile syrup that you normally find accompanying wontons at Thai restaurants. The best sauce is the one made of pulverized ginger and spring onions. It jolts awake everything it touches.

If you deviate from the main attraction, you'll find teriyaki- and orange-chicken bowls in your path. But you'd do better with the well-made Thai yellow curry, which bursts with fresh vegetables and white-meat chicken strips.

I would skip the fried-chicken dumplings, though, which are indistinguishable from any other Chinese fast-food gyoza. I'm still, however, undecided on the Hat Yai chicken wings, which originate from Southern Thailand. They're stained dark with a soy marinade and fried until the skin is crisp, but they're showered with fried shallots that just end up at the bottom of the plate, doing nothing.

Whatever you opt for, know that the Chicken Rice is practically a hawker stall. Though it occupies its own storefront, when there are more than two parties ahead who decide to eat in, you will end up consuming your chicken rice while standing. But, hey, at least there's air conditioning.

THE CHICKEN RICE
318 W. Fifth St., Santa Ana, (714) 852-3467, www.thechickenrice.us. Open Mon.-Sat., 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Meals, $7-$13.95. No alcohol.

WHAT THE ALE
» GREG NAGEL

Pliny's Everywhere

There's one beer that always seems to stand out among a shelf of others. Its simple green label, featuring a bright-red dot, is almost as iconic as the Target logo. And when you spot Russian River Brewing's Pliny the Elder, you grab a bottle, maybe two, if there's no limit.

I've seen grown men walk into a store, pass up rows of excellent beer, ask if there's Pliny, then storm out if the answer is no.

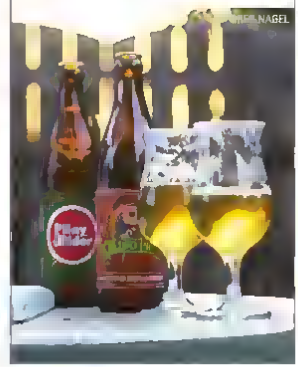
Some places simply put up a sign so you don't even need to go inside: "Pliny is out."

Others make the pilgrimage to Russian River Brewing Co.'s Santa Rosa headquarters to buy cases to bring back for beer trades.

When the company brought online its new 85,000-square-foot brewing facility in Windsor, I knew there was a strong possibility of seeing more of that iconic red dot inside local coolers—and oh, boy, was I right. Places that typically never had it now suddenly do. It's almost like rabbits multiplying. I was recently in three stores, and each one had Pliny on shelves, with more in the back. I watched grown men gasp as if they were kids opening a PlayStation on Christmas morning. One even said, "Squeee."

A classic double IPA, Pliny the Elder has a lot of competition in local stores these days, where even the latest brew craze, Hazy New England IPAs, are slowing down in popularity. Will seeing more Pliny the Elder on shelves cause its popularity to dwindle? I don't really mind either way. . . I'll be over here, sipping on one.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM



GREG NAGEL

STAY INFORMED

OCWEEKLY

PRIDE ISSUE
PRIDE WEEK 6/15-6/23

PUBLISHES 6/13/19

OC WEEKLY
ORANGE COUNTY'S LEADING SOURCE OF NEWS, CULTURE, AND ENTERTAINMENT

C'est Trop Bon

Savoring sexy bites at Ô Gourmet French Café & Bakery

DÉLICIEUX

PHOTOS BY ERIN DEWITT

LONG BEACH LUNCH
» ERIN DEWITT

It didn't take long for the space that formerly housed Babette's Feast, a quick-service sandwich-and-pastry stop on the north end of Second Street for nearly two decades, to get scooped up. Locals were sad to see Babette's close—but there was good news. The new tenants came bearing baked goods, too. Ô Gourmet French Café & Bakery, which opened at the end of March, is Long Beach's latest artisanal bakery. Plus, Pandor, the *other* French bakery on the street, is all the way at the *other* end of Second, which is too far to walk to when you're craving croissants, as well as way too close to drive to and hunt for another parking spot.

Ô Gourmet French Café & Bakery owner Eric Djomby, who hails from France (as does his business partner, Benoit Jussaume), sought to bring their traditional French bakery across OC borders after the success of their sleepy San Juan Capistrano locale. How is business different in Long Beach? For starters, "the daily traffic is more intense," says Djomby.

Open at 7 a.m. daily, the café offers a wide range of casual French fare—that's if you can make it past the bakery case, where dozens of mini almond croissants and perfectly spiraled, sugary palmiers greet you. Half the case is dedicated to a rainbow of macarons. And everything is prepared fresh in house.

Among the breakfast options are a fresh baguette served open-faced with jam and butter and the Morning Brioche, which comes with bacon, cheese, béchamel sauce and a fried egg. There are salads and sandwiches for lunch, but don't overlook the menu section titled "The Frenche's." That's where you'll find the good stuff: croques, quiches and crepes.

"The Croque Monsieur is our most popular," says Djomby. "You can even make that sexy by adding a fried egg on the top, and that's how the Croque Madame was born."

That Croque Monsieur—of which a few uncooked versions wait in said display case, just begging to be thrown onto a scalding cast-iron griddle—comes as a deceivingly dainty sandwich. Under cheese-crusted bread oozes velvety béchamel sauce and tangy, funky Gruyère, and somewhere in there are a few thin shavings of ham. To cut the richness, the sandwich is accompanied by leafy greens tossed in a light, sweet vinaigrette.

Asked for his personal favorites, Djomby demurs. "Hard to say; I love all of them," he says. "But the Croque Monsieur, the quiche Lorraine and the feta one are my favorite—*c'est trop bon*."

The quiches are a good 2 inches high, their golden, buttery crusts built up and filled with soft, fluffy eggs. The Lorraine comes stacked almost like a cake, with evenly layered strips of Swiss cheese and bacon. The dish is paired with the same (and welcomed) simple green salad.

Right now, Ô Gourmet offers only breakfast and lunch, closing up shop by 6:30 p.m. most days. But expect to see some additions to the cafe's menu very soon. When asked about a future dinner service, Djomby teases, "Yes, we are getting close to presenting our new menu."

Ô GOURMET FRENCH CAFÉ & BAKERY
4621 E. Second St., Long Beach, (562) 987-4536; ogourmetcafe.com

PHOTOS BY GREG NAGEL

Crowning Glory

Five Crowns goes full spring

It's weird to think that just 12 years before Five Crowns in Corona del Mar opened, the newly appointed Queen Elizabeth II decided to change the image used in all official government insignia to the Saint Edward's Crown. And the best place to get a good view of that little slice of history is the iconic poppy-red British phonebooth that sits in front of the historic restaurant, begging for a selfie, inside or out.

The rest of the property is a replica of an English country inn, complete with period paintings, a proper Side Door pub, and enough Lawry's beef to meatsplain how a proper cut should be served.

Diners can indulge in the signature prime rib roast, small plates of gastro fare, and cheese and charcuterie. But chef Alejandra Padilla has introduced some new menu items that have us sprung for spring.

The baby beets and burrata ($14) may not sound like a must-get item to start, but the spectrum of colors resembles a David Hockney painting thanks to muscat grapes, red and golden heirloom beets, beads of puffed quinoa, and burrata so firm it's almost like a melted Abba-Zaba that's been sitting in your car all day in the sun, yet with the consistency of a poached egg. The best part is sliding the beets across the aromatic basil-seed vinaigrette for a little extra yum. Was I supposed to eat the blue borage flowers? I totally did.

EAT & DRINK THIS NOW

» GREG NAGEL

If you're looking for a drink to pair with the dish, definitely go with a Lemon Meringue ($16), which smells like citrus buds bursting in the early evening. It fits in perfectly with the restaurant's motif, as the full-bodied Silent Pool London dry gin gives the drink its spring-forward balance. The use of chamomile syrup plays well with the botanicals infused within and the frothy head, keeping you coming back for more.

I instantly regretted ordering the grilled Hawaiian prawns upon looking them in their beady little black eyes, but then I sighed in relief when I found their heads were attached like a mall Easter bunny on break and they slid off with ease. I got more of a Greek island vibe than Hawaiian with the salt-cured kalamata-like olives, the juicy pulp of fresh blood orange and bright bits of kumquat.

To share with the table, I recommend the 24-ounce pork tomahawk, but make sure to call dibs on the handle. The gargantuan hunk is sous vide, then crusted and dusted with rosemary, thyme, garlic and fennel pollen, which totally didn't make me reach for the Claritin.

FIVE CROWNS AND THE SIDE DOOR
3801 E. Coast Hwy., Corona del Mar,
lawrysonline.com/five-crowns

Hi-Time Wine Cellars

250 Ogle Street • Costa Mesa
(behind Staples on 17th St.)
949.650.8463 • www.hitimewine.net

May 2019
Wine of the Month!

Enrique Mendoza
"La Tremenda" 2016
Monastrell $9.95 [378155]

WINE ADVOCATE
92 POINTS

"Their entry-level Monastrell is the 2016 La Tremenda, sourced from the vineyard that names the wine from their estate "El Chaconero" in the village of Villena, a plot at 600 meters altitude planted some 25 years ago. It fermented in stainless steel and matured in French barriques for six months. 2016 is a cooler year than 2014 or 2015, and the wines reflect it. It was not an easy year, they had to do a strict selection of grapes, and it paid off. It has the character of the variety, with its elegant rusticity with a fresh, herbal twist and a palate with fine-grained tannins, nicely textured and with a supple, very tasty finish. **This is a superb introduction to Monastrell from Alicante at an incredible price."**

There's Always a *Catch-22*

War is hell one more time with the latest adaptation of Joseph Heller's novel

BY MATT COKER

YO, YOSSARIAN

COURTESY HULU

Since the publication of *Catch-22* in 1961, Joseph Heller's novel has been the basis for a 1970 feature film, a 1973 television-series pilot, a 2007-'08 touring U.S. stage play and, when it premieres Friday, a six-episode Hulu miniseries. Not bad considering the book, which is based on Heller's experiences as a U.S. Army Air Force bombardier during World War II, first came out to mixed reviews and no awards. However, *Catch-22* would become a cultural phenomenon because it spoke to young people who feared being shipped off to Vietnam.

Heller actually started writing his book in 1951, as the Korean War beckoned. The first chapter of what was then *Catch-18* was published in the literary magazine *New World Writing*, whose same 1955 edition included an excerpt from what would become Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*. It was at the request of Heller's agent that the title was changed to avoid confusion with a recent World War II novel by Leon Uris called *Mila 18*. Thus, the phenomenon of, say, being unable to find your eyeglasses because you need them to see so you can find them almost became a Catch-18.

The fictional bureaucratic military rule Catch-22 is applied to a dangerously daring airman named Orr in Heller's scattershot book, Mike Nichols' humorously cutting movie, and Hulu's decidedly darker and effective dramedy (at least based on the first two episodes). The base physician, Doc Daneeka, agrees with young bombardier John "Yo-Yo" Yossarian that Orr must be crazy to enthusiastically keep flying despite repeatedly being shot down and rescued at sea. However, Orr must ask to be grounded because he is crazy and unfit to fly, and the doctor must refuse because the very act of asking proves the airman is sane.

The movie is closer to the book in that the story unfolds in a non-chronological way and different events are depicted from varying points of view. The first Hulu episode starts at the very beginning: basic training at the Santa Ana Army Air Base, whose northern border was two blocks from where this sentence is being typed in Costa Mesa. (It was the area between Baker and Wilson streets to the north and south and Newport and Harbor boulevards to the east and west.) We see several flyboys lined up, with the camera pausing just long enough on each face to flash a corresponding nickname. This attempt to introduce the majority of *Catch-22*'s characters probably read clever in Luke Davies and David Michôd's script, but there are so many dudes I just gave up.

What snapped me back into formation was Lieutenant Scheisskopf (George Clooney) profanely and hilariously dressing his men down for being fuck-ups, although not nearly as profanely and hilariously as Gunnery Sergeant Hartman (Lee Ermey) did at the beginning of Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket*. Clooney and his frequent collaborator Grant Heslov developed the project, directed the episodes (along with Ellen Kuras) and executive produced (with Kuras, Davies, Michôd, Richard Brown and Steve Golin). The action shifts from the base to the bedroom, where Yossarian (Christopher Abbott) is banging a hot platinum blonde (Julie Ann Emery). Discovering her link to another character plants the seed for complications to come, but the rest of the episode pivots to the absolute terror of having anti-aircraft fire exploding all around you while you are inside a flying bomber's glass bowl. The visual effects are stunning as Abbott conveys with his eyes, sweat and speech Yossarian's budding post-traumatic stress disorder.

Yossarian serves as the conscience of *Catch-22*, with the bombardier coming to the realization that his enemies are the Germans trying to blast him out of the sky *and* his superiors putting him in harm's way—over and over, just as he nears completion of a quota of missions that will have him leaving his base in Italy for home, sadistic Colonel Cathcart (Kyle Chandler, out of his gore and channeling Curtis LeMay) keeps increasing mission quotas.

Readers around my age are used to such critical depictions in stories set during the Korean (*M*A*S*H*) and Vietnam (pick a dozen) wars, but not so much on the absurdity of the same war that produced the Greatest Generation. Not that the various versions of *Catch-22* are nearly as preachy as the last few seasons of TV's *M*A*S*H* or as stiflingly gloomy as Oliver Stone's *Platoon* and *Born on the Fourth of July*.

Hulu's entry really finds its comedic legs in the second episode, especially as it concerns First Lieutenant Milo Minderbinder (Daniel David Stewart), the mess-hall officer-turned-war profiteer who was so brilliantly played by Jon Voight in the original film. Nichols cast that movie so well—check out not only the first slate listing the actors, which begins with Alan Arkin and ends with Orson Welles, but also the second and third cards—but two hours was not sufficient to get to know each well enough for their emotional payoffs.

Clooney and Heslov were smart to add more hours, tell a more linear and realistic story, cast more age appropriately, and include music that immediately evokes the 1940s, so that—fingers crossed for future episodes—they could accomplish what Nichols could not.

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

What an Excellent Day for an Exorcism

BY MATT COKER

Tolkien. Dome Karukoski's new biodrama is about the formative years of the orphaned author J.R.R. Tolkien (Nicholas Hoult). *Various theaters; fandango.com. Thurs., May 16, visit the website for days, show times and ticket prices.*

El Chicano. East LA twin brothers (Raul Castillo in a dual role) choose to live their lives differently and wind up on opposite sides of the law. *Thurs., May 16 at: Edwards Aliso Viejo Stadium 20, (844) 462-7342. 12:40, 3:35, 6:45 & 10:05 p.m., Edwards Long Beach Stadium 26, (844) 462-7342. 12:55 p.m., Regal Garden Grove, (844) 462-7342. 9:40 p.m., Regal Irvine Spectrum, (844) 462-7342. 10:40 p.m. Call theaters for ticket prices.*

Shadow. Commander Yu (Deng Chao) uses a body double (also played by Chao) in a plot against Pei's king (Zheng Kai). Presented in Mandarin with English subtitles. *Edwards University Town Center 6, (844) 462-7342. Thurs., May 16, 1, 4, 7 & 9:45 p.m. $10.20-$13.25.*

Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas. Johnny Depp stars as Hunter S. Thompson, who is supposed to be covering a car race in the Mojave Desert, but Sin City keeps getting in the way. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., May 16, 2, 5:30 & 8 p.m., Sat., 10 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Mary Poppins Returns. The magical nanny (Emily Blunt) returns to help the Banks siblings during a difficult time. *Fullerton Public Library, (714) 738-6327. Thurs., May 16, 6:30 p.m. Free.*

Saga of Tanya the Evil—the Movie. Imperial Army Major Tanya Degurechaff avoids death and a trip to hell while battling the Republic Army. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Thurs., May 16, 7:30 p.m. $12.50.*

The Exhibition Room Silent Film Series. Women in silent films are celebrated on "Mimosa Day." *The Exhibition Room—Long Beach Craft Cocktails; www.theexhibitionroom.com. Thurs., May 16, 8 p.m. $10. 21+*

The Man Who Killed Don Quixote. A cynical advertising director (Adam Driver) is mistaken for Sancho Panza by an old Spanish shoemaker (Jonathan Pryce), who believes he is Don Quixote. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., May 16, 10 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Charlie Says. Mary Harron's provocative new film is based on the lives and crimes of murderous cult leader Charles Manson (Matt Smith) and the three women who killed for him—Leslie Van Houten (Hannah Murray), Patricia Krenwinkel (Sosie Bacon) and Susan Atkins (Marianne Rendon)—in the summer of '69. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., May 16, 10:15 p.m. $7-$10.50*

The Biggest Little Farm. John Chester's new documentary follows two dreamers with a dog and plans to bring harmony to their lives and the land. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Opens Fri., call for show times and ticket prices.*

Non-Fiction. Olivier Assayas' 2018 French dramedy is about publisher Alain (Guillaume Canet), his TV actress wife, Selena (Juliette Binoche); his novelist friend, Leonard (Vincent Macaigne); and Leonard's companion, Valérie (Nora Hamzawi). *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Opens Fri., call for show times and ticket prices.*

Trial by Fire. Edward Zwick's new drama is based on the true-life bond that formed between a Texas death-row inmate (Jack O'Connell) and a Houston mother of two (Laura Dern) fighting for his freedom. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Opens Fri., call for show times and ticket prices.*

Incredibles 2. Bob Parr/Mr. Incredible (voiced by Craig T. Nelson) takes care of the kids while his wife, Helen/Elastigirl (Holly Hunter), is out saving the world. Candy, popcorn and activities are free, other food is available for purchase. Street parking is limited. *Marina Park, 1600 W. Balboa Blvd., Newport Beach, (949) 270-8150. Fri., 6:45 p.m. Free.*

The Exorcist+ The Summoners. William Friedkin's 1973 masterpiece has a sweet 12-year-old (Linda Blair) exhibiting strange behavior that is soon accompanied by strange events. Writer/director Christian Ackerman's *The Summoners* has two high-school girls inviting a new friend to join their secret game of summoning spirits for the thrill of being possessed. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 7:30 p.m. $7-$10.50*

Sly. A chap (Hamed Behdad) wants to become a member of parliament despite a reputation for recklessness and taking arbitrary action. *Starlight Cinema City, (714) 970-6700. Fri.-Thurs., May 23, 7:30 & 9:55 p.m. Call theater for ticket prices.*

UHF. An out-of-work fellow (Weird Al Yankovic) gets the deed to a local TV station owned by his uncle (Stanley Brock). Wacky programming ensues. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri.-Sat., 11 p.m. $7-$10.50*

Private Screening 2019. Films produced by the MMET Media Team's young editors, directors, screenwriters and cinematographers. *Huntington Beach Academy for the Performing Arts Studio, hbapa.org/see. Sat., 6 p.m. $10.*

Ralph Breaks the Internet. Ralph (voiced by John C. Reilly) and Vanellope (Sarah Silverman) discover a wi-fi router in their arcade, which leads to a new adventure. Bring a blanket or lawn chair. *Hurless Barton Park, (714) 961-7192. Sat., 8 p.m. Free*

Zarathustra, the Golden Star. After eight years of extensive study, hundreds of hours of filming and tens of thousands of hours of editing, what is billed as the first and most unbiased documentary on Zarathustra and the faith he founded in Iran is presented in seven parts. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Check the website for dates and show times. $10.50.*

The Rocky Horror Picture Show. Midnight insanity performs. *Art Theatre, artlbeachtheatre.org. Sat., 11:55 p.m. $9-$12.*

Bolshoi Ballet: *Carmen Suite/ Petrushka.* Cuban choreographer Alberto Alonso originally conceived the one-act *Carmen* for legendary Bolshoi prima ballerina Maya Plisetskaya. *Petrushka* is a new creation by contemporary choreographer Edward Clug. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Sun., 12:55 p.m. $16-$18; also at Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Sun., 1:15 p.m. (live), Tues., 7 p.m. (encore). $14-$17*

Cléo From 5 to 7. A young, carefree and somewhat spoiled semi-famous singer (Corinne Marchand) wanders through Paris and hits up friends and strangers for emotional support as she awaits test results that may confirm she has cancer. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sun., 2, 4 & 8 p.m., Mon.-Tues., 2, 4, 6 & 8 p.m. $7-$10.50*

Steel Magnolias. A newly arrived young beautician (Daryl Hannah) tries to fit in with a clique of women (who include Dolly Parton, Julia Roberts and Sally Fields) in a small Louisiana town's hair salon. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Sun., 4 & 7 p.m., Tues. Wed., 7 p.m. $12.50.*

Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind. A young princess lives in a future world decimated by atmospheric poisons and swarming with gigantic insects. Bring the kids! *Various theaters, www.fathomevents.com. Mon., 7 p.m. (dubbed), Tues., 7 p.m. (subtitled) $12.50.*

The NeverEnding Story. A tormented boy (Barret Oliver) slips into a book shop to escape schoolyard bullies. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Tues., 7:30 p.m. $8.*

Brazil. A low-level, daydreaming bureaucrat (Pryce) gets caught up in a scandal surrounding a typo that led to a man's death. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Wed.-Thurs., May 23, 2:30, 5:30 & 8:30 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Singing in Exile. An American couple trying to preserve their ancestral chant takes a European acting troupe to Anatolia, where the Armenian civilization has been destroyed. *UC Irvine, McCormick Screening Room, Humanities Gateway 1070, Irvine. Wed., 5 p.m. Free.*

The African Queen. The sister (Katharine Hepburn) of a British missionary catches a ride with slovenly, gin-swilling skipper Charlie Allnut (Humphrey Bogart) back to civilization. *Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Wed., 7:30 p.m. $9.*

Pacific Rim Uprising. Jake Pentecost (John Boyega) and Mako Mori (Rinko Kikuchi) reunite to lead a new generation of Jaeger pilots against a new Kaiju threat. *Fullerton Public Library, (714) 738-6327. Thurs., May 23, 1 p.m. Free.*

Bellingcat—Truth in a Post-Truth World. Hans Pool's 2018 documentary about the "citizen investigative journalist" collective who exposed the truth of impenetrable news stories such as the MH17 disaster and the mysterious poisoning of a Russian spy in the United Kingdom. *OCMA Expand, ocmaexpand.org. Thurs., May 23, 7 p.m. Free, but limited, first-come, first-served seating.*

The Cold Blue. Never-before-seen color footage shot by William Wyler puts you 30,000 feet over Nazi Germany 75 years ago. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Thurs., May 23, 7:30 p.m. $15.*

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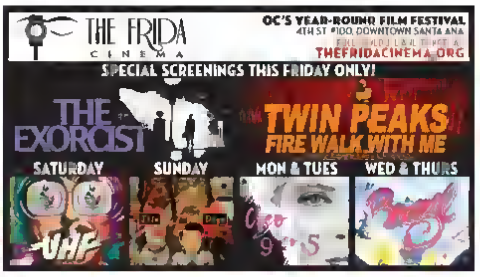
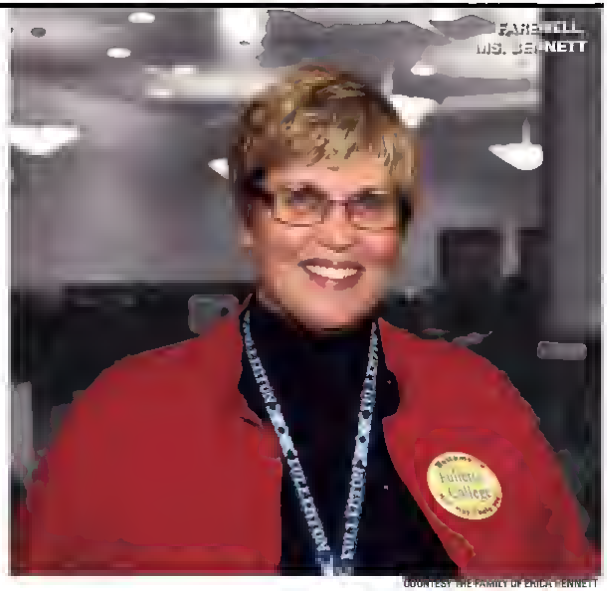
WARNER BROS



Poetic and Cerebral

Erica Bennett, RIP

BY JOEL BEERS



COURTESY THE FAMILY OF ERICA BENNETT

"Bad day at the hospital Come tell me jokes."

Two days later, when I finally caught a breather to check my Facebook messages, I apologized for not responding sooner. Not merely out of obligation or guilt—Erica Bennett was dramaturging a play I'd written. I had to check in, right?

"Don't worry Joel, I can wait until u have more time."

No, she couldn't. Or at least the chronic illness that she had battled for most of her adult life couldn't. Four days later, Bennett, as prolific and committed a playwright as OC has ever seen, was moved to a rehab facility. Eight days after that, on May 4, she was dead at 57.

There are few things more self-serving than making another person's death all about you. But anyone who knew Bennett on a more creative than personal level would probably agree that when communicating with her online, it was always about you. What you were working on. How much she liked something you had posted. How you were doing.

Meanwhile, she was literally dying inside. Housebound for more than a year, usually bedridden and under palliative care, her lung capacity diminishing more and more, prescribed a buffet of drugs and medical treatments that each carried their own pernicious side effects, she inched inexorably toward that final dying of a light that, once extinguished, would plunge her into something unknowable, but that she had long known had readied its embrace.

But, oh, she did not go quietly. As the physical world she could interact with shrank, she seemed hell-bent on claiming the digital one. Rarely a day passed without multiple posts, ranging from the inspirational and profound to the mundane. But the constant was always her writing: new ideas she was pursuing, old ones she was revising, what she'd submitted, who she'd heard back from.

For Bennett was many things: actress, friend, confidant, collaborator and colleague, dog-lover, generous hostess, systems librarian at Fullerton College. But it all sprang from, or was informed by, what most defined her: writer. And it defined her *because* it's impossible to define. It just is. In contrast to those of us who write for a living, a hobby, out of necessity or a warped concept of what "fun" is, writers just do. They are neither born nor trained, it is less skill or craft, talent or gift, calling or romantic ideal than it is work. Their work.

The founder of the Orange County Playwrights Alliance and co-founder of OC-Centric (the county's only play festival dedicated to local writers), Eric Eberwein says three questions pulsed through Bennett's work.

Who am I? What am I doing? Why am I here?

"Those were the three questions she was dedicated to exploring," Eberwein says. "And she approached them with the mentality of an artist, never in any commercial way. She really poured herself into the work. Some playwrights are very opaque; you really can't see them in what they create. You could definitely see Erica in hers."

Though not married to a style, Bennett routinely included in her plays characters asking questions of other characters and often not receiving a response, according to Eberwein. He thinks that was less of a technique than another manifestation of Bennett transmitted to the page. "I don't think we ever get answers to the life we're living, but we have to ask the questions—at least some of us do," he says. "Erica did."

Both Eberwein and William Mittler, who had Bennett in the first playwriting class he taught at Fullerton College, said she was a frenetic reviser and loved feedback and the play-development process. But don't kid yourself. Though words such as *brave*, *fierce* and *uncompromising* were used by her chorus of Facebook friends to describe the courage of someone who battled her declining health so valiantly, they also captured how protective she was of that which most nurtured her and gave her life meaning: her words.

"She was always creating, changing stuff around, evolving her work," says Mark Roster, a fellow OC theater artist who performed in three of her productions. "She was often criticized for [having] a lot of words, not a lot of action. And there were times I couldn't understand what she was trying to say because it was so poetic and cerebral.

"But though she took criticism well. . . She would fight for her words. She told me once that after someone [critiqued her play], the comments weren't criticism as much as a 'verbal abortion.' If she felt you were being nitpicky or not respecting her work, she would come out with guns blazing."

If respect is not given as much as it is earned, maybe the most fitting eulogy was delivered by Jordan Young, a fellow playwright and theater journalist who wrote this on Bennett's Facebook wall.

"Erica, you'll be happy to know you've inspired me to finish the first draft of a play I started more than three years ago."

The show, as with life and the work, must go on.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

ARTSOVERLOAD

» AIMEE MURILLO

May 17-23

OC GREEK FEST A comprehensive cultural fair with a marketplace offering Greek cuisine, goods and traditional music and dancing showcases. There are also carnival rides and games for children. Fri., 3-10 p.m., Sat.-Sun., noon-10 p.m. $3; seniors 65 and older/children 12 and younger/military members, free. St. John's Church, 405 N. Dale St., Anaheim. (714) 827-8181. ocgreekfest.com

CURTAINS, A MUSICAL WHODUNIT A murder mystery/comedy/musical about a stage actress who dies under strange circumstances; her supporting cast are all suspects. Fri.–Sat., 8 p.m., Sun., 2 p.m. Through May 26. $25. Alchemy Theatre Co. at Costa Mesa Playhouse, 661 Hamilton St., Costa Mesa. (949) 650-5269. alchemytheatrecompany.ticketleap.com.

SPRING CARNIVAL This play day for families includes a giant maze, an obstacle course race, a bounce-house area, a petting zoo, performers and workshops. Sat., 1 p.m. Free. Argyros Plaza at the Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa. (714) 556-2787. www.scfta.org

ZANETTO This one-act opera concerns a rich and beautiful hostess of a hotel being romanced by a wandering minstrel named Zanetto. Wine and refreshments will be provided. Sat., 8:30 p.m. Free, but RSVP required. Molly's Music, 711 W. 17th St., Ste. 204, Costa Mesa. (949) 326-5120; mollysmusic.org.

CALIFORNIA MOTO MARKET A motorcycle apparel and accessory market that is primarily focused on women. Sun., 11 a.m. Free. OC Motorcycle, 3191 Airport Loop Dr., Ste. A, Costa Mesa. (714) 957-5775; californiamotomarket.com.

SURREAL TEA PARTY Margaret Carson shares a lecture on the surreal paintings of Remedios Varo along with tea and fine pastries. Fantastic attire is encouraged. Sun., 1 p.m. Free, but RSVP required. Makaia Center for the Arts, 611 N. Main St., Santa Ana. (714) 465-1190. www.makaiacenterarts.org.

KITTY HALL Locals are invited to meet and play with the shelter cats from Long Beach Animal Care Services in hopes of adopting them. Tues., 2 p.m. Free; adoptions, $20. Long Beach City Hall, 333 W. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach. (562) 570-6555. www.longbeach.gov.

FULLERTON MARKET The weekly farmers' market features live music, arts and crafts, locally grown produce for sale, and an outdoor beer garden. Thurs., May 23, 6:30 p.m. Free. Downtown Fullerton Plaza on Wilshire Avenue between Harbor Boulevard and Pomona Avenue, Fullerton, www.cityoffullerton.com

A Writer Remembered

Former *LA Times* critic Mike Boehm gave a voice to OC music

BY NATE JACKSON

COURTESY FRANCINE HANKEBG

Hard, fast and loud. That was the way Mike Boehm wrote about every crack and crevice of the Orange County music scene for more than a decade. From the oddball years of the late '80s through its storied sonic boom in the '90s, Boehm reliably chronicled OC's mutations of punk, metal, country, folk, ska and sun-bleached psychedelia, leaving no amp unturned in his search for the next big thing.

However, Boehm's life ended far too early on May 2, following a seizure and cardiac arrest related to complications from Lyme disease. He was 63.

From 1988 to 1999, the Providence, Rhode Island, native was a reporter for the *Los Angeles Times*, covering the many wonders and weirdos behind the Orange Curtain for the *Times*' OC edition. He provided an unvarnished portrait of a territory once written off as a suburban wasteland in the shadow of LA. It caught hold of him, and for years, he was a Huntington Beach resident. Though he eventually moved on to cover fine arts and major, finance-based entertainment stories for the *Times*, he never lost his connection to our music scene or the people he wrote about.

He once told his rabbi that the secret to being a rock critic was wearing earplugs. But his ears and curiosity were always open to new music, new life and new experiences.

After leaving the *Times* in 2015, he began his next chapter as the director of communications for Irvine-based MFour Mobile Research, where he continued doing what he did best: telling great stories—or at least making sense out of the ones being told by the company's data-driven mobile-phone surveys. In fact, the day of his death, Boehm was being celebrated for writing the presentation that helped the MFour team earn a first-place award for a recent data project. Not only did Boehm translate the study into English for the average person, but his beautiful prose also wowed the judges of the competition. But then tragedy struck. He suffered a seizure at the office; his co-workers attempted to revive him, and he was taken to the hospital, where he suffered a heart attack and passed away.

Throughout the slice of his long career that focused on Orange County, Boehm answered his calling in smoky clubs and dank local haunts, from airport bars to Irvine Meadows. In the bones of each story, he applied his skills from a former life as a dogged, East Coast crime reporter to the Wild West of the SoCal music scene, where he reported on the county's bastion of cultural bastards. Bands getting their start here were in dire need of a scribe who could appreciate the rawest and rarest of talent.

"He brought as much enthusiasm, passion and knowledge to writing about the Swamp Zombies, the Cadillac Tramps and Michael Ubaldini as he did writing about Bob Dylan or Aretha," says Randy Lewis, a fellow reporter at the *Times*.

Together, Lewis and Boehm covered the Orange County club scene, writing about everyone from North County punkers Social Distortion, the Adolescents and Agent Orange to beach-city bands the Crowd and TSOL. It was an era when storied venues including Safari Sam's, the Cuckoo's Nest (later dubbed the Concert Factory) and Ichabod's carved out a window to the underground and gave rise to indie labels such as Doctor Dream. They captured the metamorphosis from the decline of OC's foundational punk bands into the amorphous alt-rock of bands such as the Cadillac Tramps. He gave a little band called the Offspring some of their first ink. As the rise of ska mounted into third wave, Boehm covered the ascension of bands such as My Superhero, Sublime and No Doubt.

As a genuine fan, Boehm dared to question his favorite acts, praising them and punishing them—sometimes in the same paragraph. Even as an unabashed music nerd and a hit of an outsider, Boehm earned his rep as an honest, intrepid reporter you could still have beers with, even after receiving one of his freshly penned lashings.

"He covered us a lot, so I had a professional relationship with him. We didn't always love what he wrote about us, especially [singer] Gabby [Gaborno]," says Cadillac Tramps guitarist Brian Coakley. "Sometimes, he would praise our songwriting, but then say something about Gabby's singing not being quite there. I will say one thing about him. He was a true journalist and a total professional. He would do his research, he would come into an interview and know what he was talking about."

His passion manifested itself in the loudest of ways. One thing anyone who worked with Boehm can attest to is that his voice carried weight. If he was in the newsroom, he delivered interviews as though he had a bullhorn in his hand, unmistakably loud and sometimes even entertaining for his colleagues.

"There was some altercation at one of the remaining punk venues in Orange County at the time, and the police were called," says former *Times* colleague and onetime *OC Weekly* music editor Jim Washburn. "You'd only hear one side of the conversation, and he'd say, 'Just to be clear—because I'm not really getting this. Did he spit on your shoes before you hit him with the mic stand or after?'"

Years after his pen moved away from OC music, friends could often find him in the crowd at shows, including the recent memorial concert for Chris Gaffney in Long Beach. Boehm had been a big supporter of Gaffney's, who passed away in 2008, calling him a "roots-music omnivore whose earthly aplomb and offhand mastery of many styles made him a quintessential Southern California bar musician."

The bittersweet show was a reunion of sorts for OC music expats who hadn't seen each other in years. Everyone still remembered Boehm. "Mike was very much a supporter of the foundational aspect of a grassroots music scene, and he'd find those bands and give it all an airing and write about those he thought were worthwhile," Lewis says.

At the show, Lewis met up with Boehm and Washburn and relived Gaffney's glory days with members of his band the Cold Hard Facts and many others who covered Gaffney's material. Gaffney's widow, Julie, threw her arms around Boehm and gave him a huge hug.

Boehm never stopped checking out new bands, and his thirst for live music stayed with him till the end. His parting words to Lewis after the Gaffney concert, just five weeks before his death, were "Lemme know if you got an extra ticket to something, and I'll go hang out with you at a show."

Though Boehm's story ended early, his legacy as a writer, friend, colleague and searcher of truth leaves behind more than a trail of words. His passion and immortal wisdom reminds us to approach our own lives the way he approached every article: hard, fast and loud.

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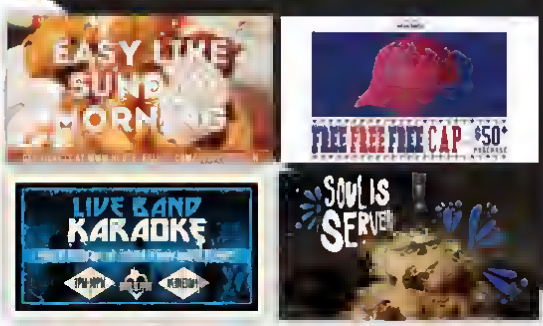

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A Metal Night at the Opera

Avantasia deliver 'Queen on steroids' to Anaheim

BY CLAY MARSHALL

COURTESY NUCLEAR BLAST

When Eric Martin and Geoff Tate—the respective voices behind the iconic power ballads "To Be With You" and "Silent Lucidity"—perform in Anaheim on Sunday, it won't be with Mr. Big or Queensrÿche, the rock acts with whom they topped the charts a quarter-century ago.

Instead, they'll be part of a touring party for an ambitious group that has been making major waves internationally that are finally rippling out to America. Avantasia, a symphonic power metal band founded two decades ago by Tobias Sammet of the German band Edguy. The group's new album, *Moonglow*, which showcases Tate and Martin on multiple tracks, debuted at No. 1 in Germany upon its February release and cracked the Top 10 in Sweden, Austria, Spain and Switzerland. (Here in the States, the record debuted at No. 46 on Billboard's Top Album Sales chart.)

Avantasia made their U.S. debut in 2016 at the old Downtown Disney location of the House of Blues. They are currently in the midst of a five-month, 21-country world tour that features four American concerts, only the second time the band have scheduled domestic live performances. Sammet hopes it won't be the last.

"We were always told that there was no fan base [in the U.S.] for such a type of music," Sammet says. "But I have a firm belief that if what you do is special and you do it with all of your heart and you deliver something that people can't get anywhere else, there is a potential audience. The first tour in the U.S. was just putting our toe in [ ] to test the waters. Now, we dare to walk in a couple of feet and see how it feels when the water is around your ankle. If it goes down well, then I hope we can slowly build this up."

The group uses multiple vocalists—many times on the same song—and perform lush, heavily orchestrated hard rock that's commonly described as "metal opera." Think a heavier Meat Loaf, although Sammet doesn't object to the descriptions "Queen on steroids" or "Trans-Siberian Orchestra without the Christmas."

"I haven't really found the right term for it myself," Sammet admits. "That proves it's something that doesn't exist. When people hear 'rock opera,' they think quite often of some storytelling in between [songs], and then comes somebody reading a poem. We don't do that hullshit—we just go onstage and play music, like Meat Loaf or Queen would do."

Overseas, Avantasia perform in arenas and large theaters when they're not headlining metal festivals, where they play before tens of thousands. But Sammet says it won't be difficult to scale down the group's live show—which routinely clocks in at three hours—when the band visit the City National Grove of Anaheim. "You're doing the same thing—it's just a little hotter, and you're a little closer to the audience," Sammet says. "The bells and whistles are nice to have, but it's about the songs and the performance. That's the core of the show, and that works even in a small place. The energy, the music—that's what it's all about."

Much of the group's Anaheim performance will showcase material from *Moonglow*, which has a fish-out-of-water theme that Sammet describes as "a very heartfelt, honest, old-fashioned, out-of-vogue record." Sammet and Martin share vocal duties on the closing track, a cover of Michael Sembello's "Maniac," the 1983 No. 1 hit that was immortalized in the movie *Flashdance*.

Sammet promises to perform the song on Sunday. "'Maniac' is a very, very brave song," he says. "I think it's a very well-crafted song. It's got such an energy with Eric that I said, 'We have to do that song live. It will add a new flavor to the show.'"

AVANTASIA

perform at the City National Grove of Anaheim, 2200 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, www.citynationalgroveofanaheim.com. Sun., 8 p.m. $47.50-$131. All ages.

CORKILL PHOTO

Friday

BURRITOS, CALIFA, SOLUTION 5:30 p.m. $7, all ages. Gardee Amp, 12762 Main St., Garden Grove, (949) 415-8544, gardeeamp.com

JOSH HEINRICHS 8 p.m., $18. 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana, (657) 231-6005, www.lasantaac.com.

METALACHI 7 p.m., $15, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

SEGA GENECIDE 9 p.m., $8. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, www.wayfarercm.com.

THE STRUMBELLAS, THE MOTH & THE FLAME 8 p.m., $25, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com

Saturday

AN EVENING WITH ORAMARAMA: 5 p.m., $10, all ages. Garden Amp, 12762 Main St., Garden Grove, (949) 415-8544, gardeeamp.com

CALISAMBA 8 p.m., $10, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, www.wayfarercm.com.

GASP; ACXDC; FIGHT IT OUT, BEYOND PAIN, BURNOUT 6 p.m., $12, all ages. Garden Amp (The Locker Room), 12762 Main St., Gardee Grove, (949) 415-8544, gardeeamp.com

THE UNLIKELY CANDIDATES, IRONTOM, THE FILTHY SOULS 9 p.m., $15, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com

VERY BE CAREFUL 9 p.m., $5. 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana, (657) 231-6005, www.lasantaac.com.

Sunday

AN EVENING WITH JOHNNY MARR 7:30 p.m., $35, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim

COREY TAYLOR AND FRIENDS 5 p.m., $30-$150, all ages. Gardee Amp, 12762 Main St., Gardee Grove, (949) 415-8544, gardeeamp.com

PHOTA, THRA; THE BLACK SOUND; INSINERATEHYMN 8 p.m., $7. 21+. Alex's Bar, 2813 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

STEEBEEWEEBEE, MOMS, KALM DOG 9 p.m., 21+, free, younger than 21, $5, all ages. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana, (657) 231-6005, www.lasantaac.com

Monday

ALRIGHT SPIDER, ALL SOULS, DANGEROUSLY SLEAZY 7:30 p.m., free. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, www.wayfarercm.com.

BLACKBEAR 7:30 p.m., $35, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

MAGIC SWORD, FACEXHUGGER 9 p.m., $16, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com.

Tuesday

YOKE LORE, LAURELINE 9 p.m., $12, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com

Wednesday

THE DAMNED; JELLO BIAFRA'S INCREDIBLY STRANGE DANCE PARTY aka Thurs., 7:30 p.m., $30, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2813 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 434-8292, www.alexsbar.com.

GEOGRAPHER, MANATEE COMMUNE 8 p.m., $15, 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana, (657) 231-6005, www.lasantaac.com.

KILLING JOKE 8 p.m., $35-$65, all ages. The Yost Theater, 307 N. Spurgeon St., Santa Ana, theyosttheater.com.

MATISYAHU 8 p.m., $25, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com.

NAV 7 p.m., $35-$37.50, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardeeWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim, (714) 778-2583, www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

TUNNELS, PEARL EARL, FLYING MACHINE 8 p.m., $5. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, www.wayfarercm.com

Thursday, May 23

SPONGE 8 p.m., $20. 21+. La Santa, 220 E. Third St., Santa Ana, (657) 231-6005, www.lasantaac.com

TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET, NERF HERDER; TIGHTWIRE 9 p.m., $18, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600, www.observatoryoc.com.

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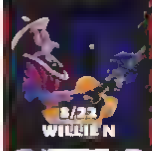

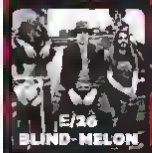

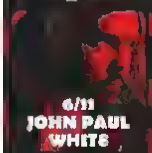

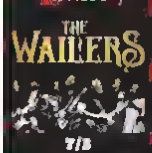

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7/12	THE PETTY BREAKERS
7/13	LOS LONELY BOYS
7/18	JEFFERSON STARSHIP
7/18	HENRY NAPONO
7/20	HINDER
7/23	TED NUGENT
7/24	TED NUGENT
7/27	SKELETON CREW *(Grateful Dead Tribute)*
7/28	STRUNZ AND FARAH
8/3	HOHN
8/7	THE BACON BROTHERS
8/9	SUBLIMED
6/15	THE PLATTERS w/ special guest THE DRIFTERS
8/16	THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS

UPCOMING SHOWS

8/21	JUSTIN HAYWARD	10/4	TRASHCAN SINATRAS
9/29	SANDY BROWN	10/5	GEOFF TATE'S OPERATION: MINDCRIME
8/30	CINDERELLA'S TOM KEIFER	10/6	DON MCLEAN
8/31	WILD CHILD (Doors Tribute)	10/11	QUIKKEN
9/8	SINBAD	10/13	JUDY COLLINS
9/8	GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA	10/24	TAS BENOIT
9/12	ADRIAN BELEW	11/2	TYRONE WELLS - The Lift Me Up Tour
9/14	LED ZEPAGAIN	11/8	SUPER DIAMOND (Neil Diamond Tribute)
9/15	SCOTT STAPP OF CREED	11/10	DAVID WILCOX
9/20	HERMAN'S HERMITS	12/7	BLUE OYSTER CULT
9/21	HERMAN'S HERMITS	12/21	AMEROSIA
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» DAN SAVAGE

Garbage human here. I've had herpes for about 15 years. The first five years, I was in a relationship with a guy who also had it. The past 10 years, I haven't been in a serious relationship. I've been a (rare, drunk) one-night-stand type of gal, and I don't usually tell the guy because, like, everyone has herpes. Frankly, it seems about as significant as medically as minimally contagious mild acne. I justify nondisclosure to myself these ways, even though I know it's not ethical. On the occasions on which I have disclosed, I've been made to feel like a leper by dudes who 10 minutes before were begging me to not have to use a condom. I obviously have a lot of resentment over having this stupid thing and over the guilt I have around nondisclosure, and I suspect my history of casual sex is influenced by not wanting to deal with this conversation. Which brings us to now. What I thought was a one-night stand has turned into a months-long affair, and I'm amazed to report I find myself liking and respecting this guy. (I know. I know.) If I really respected him, I'd have told him before I ever knew I respected him.) What do I do? I have to tell him. But how? Is there any justification for what I've done? Can I just say, "Oh, man, I noticed a thing and went and got tested and guess what?" That just adds to the lie. There's no way I can have a relationship with this guy based on trust going forward, is there? I've fucked this up, and I have to bail, don't I? Am I going to be alone for the rest of my life?

Deserves To Be Alone

You're not a garbage human, DTBA. You didn't share something you should've—the fact that you, like upwards of 50 percent of everyone, have herpes—but weren't obligated to. The problem with not disclosing, as you now know, is that casual-sex partners have a way of becoming potential long-term partners. And by the time you recognize someone's long-term potential, the stakes are so high that bailing looks like an easier option.

"We don't think DTBA needs to bail," Momo and Felix wrote in a joint email after reading your letter. "And we don't think she's destined to be alone for the rest of her life."

Momo and Felix are the co-creators of My Boyfriend Has Herpes, an Instagram account that has amassed more than 15,000 followers in just a few months. Using simple, direct prose and Momo's charming illustrations, Momo and Felix educate others about herpes while sharing the story of their relationship—from how they met to Felix's disclosure to Momo's initial hesitation to get involved with someone who has herpes.

"Our stance is pro-disclosure, always, but we know this isn't possible for everyone living with HSV," said Momo and Felix. "Unfortunately, one of the significant pitfalls of [not disclosing early on] is the difficulty it adds to the potential of a long-term relationship. And while we don't agree with DTBA's choice to not disclose to her partners, we understand why she might have made those choices. The stigma against herpes is terrible."

Momo and Felix both feel—and I'm with them—that you need to be completely honest with this guy, even if it means the relationship could end. But it might not end, DTBA. He might have a disclosure of his own to make—he could have herpes, too—or the relationship could end for other reasons. You've been dating this guy for only a few months, and he could decide to end things for reasons that have nothing to do with the disclosure you're about to make and/or your failure to make it sooner. Or you might learn something about him down the road that's a deal breaker. (Have you searched his place for MAGA hats?)

So how do you broach this topic?

"She obviously cares about this person," wrote Momo and Felix. "She made a mistake, and she wants to make it right. DTBA needs to acknowledge her actions (opting for nondisclosure) and their impact (putting her partner at risk without his informed consent). DTBA's partner may very likely feel betrayed or deceived. He might want to end the relationship, and his feelings would be valid. Unfortunately, all that DTBA can do is acknowledge her mistake, make herself vulnerable and accept his reaction."

"But whatever happens, she doesn't deserve to be alone," they said. "We all make mistakes, and we all have the opportunity to do better."

I'm a 24-year-old bisexual female, and the new person I'm dating just disclosed their HSV-2 status. I really like them and was all set to get intimate with them. But their disclosure made me change my mind. They are understanding but sad. But I feel terrible about it! They did the right, honest thing, and now they're getting punished for it. Herpes isn't dangerous, it's usually not even symptomatic, and the social stigma (the chances of someone like ME saying no) is the worst part. I get all that, intellectually. And I'd still rather not just not take the risk of becoming someone who has to have a slightly harder dating life because of the stress of disclosing to judgmental people like myself. Have I perpetuated the stigma of having herpes because I'm scared of ending up in the "life is harder now" group?

Help A Reluctant Miss

I shared your letter with Momo and Felix, HARM, and they wanted to respond to you individually. But first, a quick download: Herpes is caused by two different viruses: HSV-1 and HSV-2. HSV-1 is commonly called "oral herpes," and HSV-2 is called "genital herpes," even though both are transmitted in similar ways—vaginal, anal and oral sex, as well as simple skin-to-skin contact—and both can cause sores on the mouth or genitals. Herpes is incredibly common. Some studies have found that more than two out of every three people have herpes. But most people who have herpes don't know they do—which means that you could already have herpes yourself, HARM.

"It's HARM's right to choose not to sleep with anyone for any reason," said Momo. "But I do think that she's perpetuating the stigma by rejecting someone just because they have HSV. I totally understand her concerns, and I had the same concerns before deciding to be intimate with Felix. But after doing my research and contemplating, I decided that I'd rather contract HSV than feed into the stigma. I don't expect everyone to share the same feelings as me, but that was my choice. Plus, if she walks away from this person and keeps on dating, there's a very good chance that a future partner might have HSV and not know it. So really, is she taking less risk by not dating them?"

"Like Momo said, everyone has the right to choose who they do or don't sleep with, regardless of their reasons," said Felix. "Is HARM perpetuating the stigma against HSV? A bit. But I think her feelings are super-understandable. It's important for people to educate themselves and take action toward dismantling the stigma, but to potentially take on the burden of *living* with the stigma is a huge leap. I don't know if being concerned about becoming a victim of the stigma is the same as perpetuating it. But while HARM fears that contracting HSV will limit her dating life in the future, if she walks away from a relationship with potential, then her feelings have already limited her dating life."

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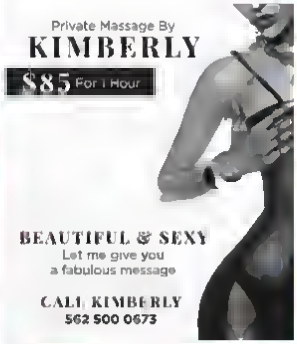
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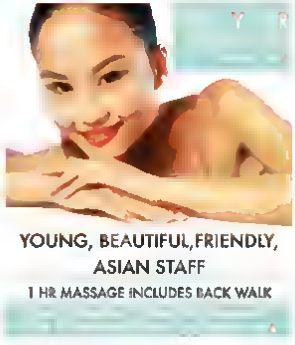
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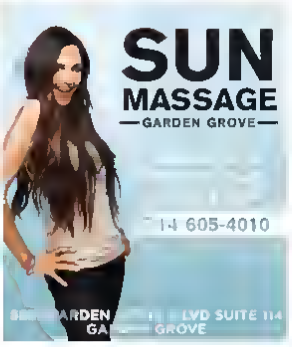
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Surf City, USA

How OC legend Dean Torrence put Huntington Beach on the map

BY DOUG JONES

"I was just thinking of this place that I've been. It's a secret beach, a real paradise. There are giant waves all day long every day of the year and plenty of girls. No hodads, no grammies—in fact, there are two girls for every guy."

—Jan Berry of Jan and Dean, in an unaired 1963 television pilot episode of *Surf Scene*

William Jan Berry and Dean Ormsby Torrence (better known as the duo Jan and Dean) sang about a fictitious spot known as "Surf City." The 1963 single, which was co-written with Brian Wilson from the Beach Boys, became the first surf song to reach No. 1 on the charts. Almost three decades later, "Surf City" graduated from a fictitious city to a real one when Torrence successfully lobbied his adopted hometown of Huntington Beach to be known as Surf City, USA. The nickname stuck and helped solidify HB as the No. 1 Orange County beach on the map.

However, life hasn't always been a beach for Torrence. By the end of the 1960s, he would be linked to not only a high-profile kidnapping, but also a tragic car crash involving Berry that would pump the brakes on his musical career.

In stark contrast to most acts of the '60s, Jan and Dean prioritized college over music, recording songs and making public appearances on the side. In 1963, they attended rival universities. Torrence majored in advertising design at USC's School of Architecture, while Berry studied medicine at UCLA.

After meeting Wilson when the Beach Boys were merely a local group from Hawthorne, Jan and Dean reached commercial success faster than their mentors. "Surf City" would be the first of many collaborations between Berry and Wilson, and while the Beach Boys' musical genius was thrilled over the hit song, his father and manager, Murry Wilson, was irate, believing his son had wasted a No. 1 record for his own group. Murry called Jan and Dean "pirates," and when Berry heard how angry Mr. Wilson was, he reportedly arrived at a Beach Boys session at Western Studios wearing an elaborate pirate costume, complete with an eye patch. Murry was not amused. Together, the Beach Boys and Jan and Dean pioneered the California sound and popularized surf lingo. (In case you were wondering, a "hodad" is a non-surfer who frequents beaches pretending to be a wave rider, and a "grammie" is beachgoer who is old and gets in the way of the surfers.)

At the height of their fame in 1964, Jan and Dean hosted and performed at the notorious TAMI Show and sang the title track for the movie *Ride the Wild Surf*, which is widely considered the best Hollywood surf movie of that decade. The pair were cast in the film to co-star alongside teen idol Fabian, but they were pulled by Columbia Pictures after news broke that connected Torrence to Barry Keenan, the mastermind behind the 1963 kidnapping of Frank Sinatra Jr. Torrence's best friend from University High School, Keenan was down on his luck when he convinced the singer to lend him $1,200 to finance the abduction. Sinatra Jr., who was following in his father's footsteps on the crooner circuit, was booked at Harrah's Lake Tahoe on Dec. 8, 1963, when the 19-year-old was taken from his hotel room at gunpoint. Sinatra Sr. paid a $240,000 ransom, which Keenan planned to eventually pay back after investing it in a business venture. The bizarre plan quickly went awry, and at the trial, Torrence first maintained that he was simply a friend of Keenan's and didn't realize what he had planned to do with the money. However, after the mid-afternoon recess, Torrence returned to change his testimony, admitting to prior knowledge of the kidnapping plot. He was not charged with being involved in the crime, but his TV pilot, *Surf Scene*, was canceled over the controversy.

In 1964, Jan and Dean released their fourth single, "Dead Man's Curve." Part of the teenage-tragedy-tale phenomenon of the period, the hit song told the story of a Corvette Stingray's deadly crash on a stretch of Sunset Boulevard in Beverly Hills known as Dead Man's Curve. Just two years later, life tragically mirrored art when Berry crashed his own Corvette Stingray in a near-fatal accident on Dead Man's Curve. He recovered from brain damage and partial paralysis, and in his absence, Torrence recorded *Save for a Rainy Day*, a concept album featuring all rain-themed songs that was created on a four-track in his garage. Torrence posed with Ken Berry, Jan's brother, for the album cover photos and kept open the possibility that they would perform together again someday. Meanwhile, in November 1967, Torrence opened the graphic-design studio Kittyhawk and became a Grammy Award-winning artist, designing the album covers for recordings by Canned Heat, the Ventures, Diana Ross & the Supremes, Harry Nilsson, and Linda Ronstadt, as well as for Steve Martin's first three classic comedy records *Let's Get Small*, *A Wild and Crazy Guy*, and *Comedy Is Not Pretty!*

Despite the many physical problems Berry had to overcome, including partial paralysis, aphasia and very limited use of his right arm, Jan and Dean performed live again at the Orange County Fair in 1985. Four years later, Torrence moved out of his Hollywood Hills home and set up permanent residence in Huntington Beach. In 1991, he helped convince elected officials to nickname the town Surf City. After several back-and-forth lawsuits with Santa Cruz, Huntington Beach was officially trademarked as "Surf City USA" in 2006, and a major marketing campaign to rebrand the town followed.

TWO WHEELS FOR EVERY GUY

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For years, the outgoing message on Torrence's answering machine was "If I'm not home, I'm probably out Boogie-boarding." Although he retired from surfing, he still runs his graphic-design company from the spacious office above his home and performs more than 40 gigs per year with his band, the Surf City All Stars. He even joined the Beach Boys onstage for their 50th Anniversary Reunion Tour at Irvine's Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre in June 2012.

The 79-year-old remains a lively and well-respected figure around Huntington Beach. Last year, he began a business venture with longtime friend Doug Cavanaugh, founder of the Ruby's Diner chain. Over breakfast one morning, Cavanaugh floated the idea of transforming the entire 2,000-square-foot second floor of the Ruby's at the end of the Huntington Beach Pier into a tiki restaurant. Torrence loved the idea. World-famous tiki-bar designer and fellow Huntington Beach resident "Bamboo" Ben Bassham designed the space, replacing the boring white walls that previously surrounded Ruby's overflow guests on busy days with bamboo walls, tiki-inspired totem poles and dim lighting to draw visitors' attention to windows facing the Pacific Ocean's gorgeous swells. A little more than a year after that breakfast, on Oct. 10, 2018, Jan and Dean's Tiki Lounge opened with a celebration featuring a live performance by the Hula Girls.

The stylish, colorful menu, which was designed by Disney contributing artist Jeff Granito, promotes a very fine selection of tropical food and cocktails, including coconut shrimp, huli-huli wings, piña coladas, mai tais, pain killers and a specialty drink called "Dean's Dream." With a liquor license still pending, as well as plans to add a walk-up bar, cocktails are currently crafted with a rum-infused brand of sake. A secret button on the wall cues "The Tiki, Tiki, Tiki Room," the official song for Walt Disney's Enchanted Tiki Room, and a Dole Whip can be ordered from the dessert menu, meaning there are two ways to experience Disneyland delights. Cavanaugh and Torrence have plans to keep the tiki torch burning by opening up to four more Jan and Dean's Tiki Lounge locations at Southern California Ruby's Diners within the next year.

It has been 56 years since Torrence recorded "Surf City," a song he estimates he has performed live more than 800 times. He remains the heartbeat of not just Huntington Beach, but also the SoCal surfing lifestyle.

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